1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

175 robes and affixes the *tika* or sign of office on his forehead. Probably on the conquest of the Bare Dongar country many of them entered the Bastar Raja's service, and supplied most of his troops or militia. The chief Halba villages of the North, such as Bare Dongar, Chhota Dongar, Kolur, Sonpur, Antagarh, Partabpur and Narainpur, are the headquarters of old *garhs* or modern *parganas*, and are islanded in a surrounding sea of 'Muria' or 'Maria' tribes like the Jhadi Telanga villages of the south; the Halba villagers seem to be the descendants of the old garrisons of *paik* militia. To this day the Halbas admit outsiders into their community, while the modern Hindu immigrants commonly take women of the country. The Halbas are thus a mixture, probably, of foreign and aboriginal blood. Their language is the *lingua franca* of Bastar, and, whether classed as a dialect of Marathi with Grierson or of Eastern Hindi with Sten Konow, is at all events an Aryan dialect, and a principal agent in the modification of aboriginal habits and thought; at [191] the 1931 census it was found that 207 *per mille* of the 262,988 Bastaris speaking Gondi dialects as their mother-tongue also spoke Halbi. Its influence is far greater than that of Telugu, which was spoken only by 36·4 out of every thousand speakers of Gondi. Actually there were only 11,662 with Telugu as mother-tongue, against 171,293 with Halbi and 25,774 with Hindustani, Chhattisgarhi and Rajasthani. Hindi influence from Chhattisgarh and the north is now the main foreign influence at work in Bastar.

The State had few dealings with the outer world from 1430 to 1860. A Maratha army under Nilu Pandit intervened on behalf of Raja Dalpat Deo's younger brother in about 1750 and captured Bastar, the old capital, only to be surprised and cut to pieces by Dalpat Deo, Nilu Pandit escaping with the help of a Banjara who sewed him up in a sack and carried him out of Bastar on his pack bullock. But in 1780 Dalpat Deo's son and successor Daryao Deo had to seek Maratha aid against his brother Ajmir Singh, and bound himself to pay a small annual tribute of Rs. 4,000 to the Bhonsla Raja of Nagpur. The Bastar chiefs, however, retained full local independence and powers of life and death, and there was no direct interference in the routine management of the State by the Nagpur authorities. Such interference as there was was either to settle the frequent quarrels between Raja Bhopal Deo and his brother and Diwan, Lal Dalganjan Singh, or was dictated by the Government of India in furtherance of their policy of suppressing Meriah or ritual human sacrifice. The history of the measures taken to suppress this practice in Orissa, especially among the Khonds of Gumsur and Kalahandi, and in Jeypore zamindari, is well known. From 1837 onwards hearsay reports were collected

4: Fürer-Haimendorf E-5 (1942-1945) 1948
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more familiar. Deviating from Trench, who employs double-consonants to indicate the shortness of the preceding vowels, thus spelling *wittana* (to run) in contrast to *witana* (to sow), I have dispensed with double-consonants; in words such as *wattana* (to put) the two consonants represent different sounds. Diacritical signs are confined to the Gondi texts, and are not used when an italicized Gondi word occurs in the English text.[1]

Those familiar with Gondi will notice that the language spoken by the Raj Gonds of Adilabad differs both from the Betul Gondi of Trench's Grammar and the Gondi spoken in South Chanda outlined by the Rev. S. B. Patwardhan.[2] A distinctive feature of Adilabad Gõndi is the frequent substitution of an initial *s* for the initial *h* of both the Betul and the Chanda dialects. Thus the Adilabad Gond pronounces *surana* (to see) instead of *hurana*, and 'no' is *sile* in Adilabad but *halle* in Betul. While in the nominative the Gonds of Betul usually drop the initial *n* inherent in the first and second person of the personal pronoun and say *ana* (I) and *imma* (thou) the Gonds of Adilabad use the full form *nana* (I) and *nime* (thou).

The Gondi of southern Chanda described by Patwardhan, follows in the choice of the initial *s* and *h* the Betul usage, but has often *l* where both Adilabad and Betul Gonds pronounce *r*. Thus the Chanda Gond, like the Hill Maria says *lon* (house), while the Adilabad Gond pronounces the word clearly with *r*, *ron*.

Further comparisons between the three dialects would be beyond the scope of this work, but although Betul Gondi contains a good many words not familiar to the Gonds of Adilabad and probably *vice-versa*, and the language of South Chanda is strongly influenced by Telugu, speakers of the three dialects have on the whole no great difficulty in understanding each other.

Raj Gonds of Adilabad on the other hand find it almost impossible to understand or make themselves understood to Hill Marias of Chanda but in going through the texts given in Grigson's *The Maria Gonds of Bastar* I found that with a knowledge of Adilabad Gondi it is easy to recognize many Maria words, some being identical and most very similar in both dialects. The pronunciation and intonation seem however, to be so divergent that to those familiar with the Adilabad idiom Maria is more easily understood written than spoken. Ethnologically it would be extremely important to ascertain the affinities of those words in the Bastar dialects which do not occur in the Gondi of the Central Provinces

1. The student of Dravidian languages will find an extensive selection of Gondi texts in Nagri script in the series "Hyderabad Gondi Literature," which I am editing in collaboration with Mr. S. B. Jogalekar for use in Gond schools. So far the following numbers have been published: *Hyderabad Gondi Reading Chart for Adults* 1, 2, and 3 (Hyderabad, 1943); *First Reader for Adults* containing stories and Riddles (Hyderabad 1944); *Gondi Primer* (Hyderabad 1944); *First Gondi Reader* (Hyderabad 1946); *Three Epic Poems* (Hyderabad 1946); *The Legend of the Surpa Folk* (Hyderabad 1947); *The Myth of Manko* (Hyderabad 1946).

4: Fürer-Haimendorf E-5 (1942-1945) 1948
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and Hyderabad. If any pre-Dravidian substratum in the languages of the Hill Marias and the Murias could be discovered we would indeed be a long step nearer to the solution of the Gond problem, which cannot be solved by ethnology alone but only by a concerted effort of ethnological linguistic, and anthropometric research.

The time for such a synthesis of Gond studies has perhaps not yet come, and linguistics as well as physical anthropology have still to make their full contribution. To the ethnologist in the meantime falls the task of detailed investigations into all the regional branches of Gond culture, and such a regional study is presented in the following chapters.